

Remarks

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

To place the subject application in better form, the specification has been amended to correct minor informalities. No new matter has been added by these changes.

Claims 1-13 and 15-19 are presented for consideration. Claims 1, 4, 11, 12, and 13 are independent.

By this paper, claim 14 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 4, and 11-13 have been amended to clarify features of Applicant's invention. Support for the changes to the claims can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

In the Office Action of June 18, 2004, claims 4 and 11-14 were objected to due to lack of antecedent basis for certain claim terms, and claims 1, 18, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0051854 A1 by Tanaka et al. Claims 2 and 3 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Apart from the objections to claims 4 and 11-14, claims 4-17 were indicated as otherwise being allowable. Applicant respectfully traverses these objections and rejections.

Nevertheless, to advance prosecution, Applicants have amended claims 4 and 11-13 to overcome the objections, and objected-to claim 14 has been cancelled. Applicant submits that independent claims 4 and 11-13 should now be deemed allowable. Claims 5-10 and 15-17

variously depend from independent claims 4, 11, and 12, and should be deemed allowable as well.

Independent claim 1 should likewise be deemed allowable, since it recites features that are neither taught nor suggested by the cited art. For example, claim 1 is directed to a positioning system that includes a stage base having a reference plane defined on its upper face, a movable portion supported for movement along the reference plane, a reaction force absorbing mechanism for absorbing a propulsion reaction force to be produced by motion of said movable portion, and a motor movable element for propelling said movable portion along the reference plane. A first distance between the reference plane and a gravity center position of said movable portion and a second distance between the reference plane and a gravity center position of said reaction force absorbing mechanism are made substantially equal to each other and/or the second distance and a third distance between the reference plane and a line of action of a force applied to said motor movable element are made substantially equal to each other.

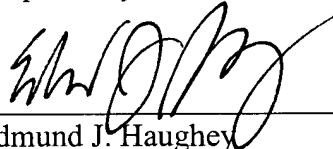
The Tanaka et al. publication discloses a stage assembly for moving and positioning a device, but does not teach or suggest at least the relationship among the first and second and/or second and third distances recited in claim 1. Indeed, the distances shown in Figures 7A and 7B of the Tanaka et al. publication are all measured in an X-Y plane that is parallel to the upper surface of the stage assembly, whereas the distances recited in claim 1 are measured from the reference plane defined by the upper face of the stage base to another point. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the present invention, as recited in independent claim 1, is also patentably defined over the cited art.

Dependent claims 18 and 19 also should be deemed allowable, in their own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent claim 1. Further individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the subject application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



Edmund J. Haughey
Registration No. 44,749
Attorney for Applicant

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200